

What is claimed is:

1. An automobile hinge for pivotably mounting a pivotable panel component to a vehicle body, said automobile hinge comprising:
 - a panel attachment plate adapted to be secured to a pivotable panel of a vehicle;
 - a body attachment plate adapted to be secured to a vehicle body; and
 - an intermediate member pivotably attached to said body attachment plate, said panel attachment plate being pivotably attached to said intermediate member, said intermediate member comprising opposite sidewalls and a center flange extending between said opposite sidewalls, said sidewalls engaging said body attachment plate with said center flange being spaced from said body attachment plate when said intermediate member is pivoted toward a first position where a first portion of said intermediate member is positioned generally along said body attachment plate, said intermediate member being securable in said first position relative to said body attachment plate.
2. The automobile hinge of claim 1, wherein said intermediate member comprises said first portion and a second portion arranged at an angle relative to one another, said intermediate member being pivotably attached to said body attachment plate at a junction of said first and second portions.
3. The automobile hinge of claim 2, wherein said panel attachment plate is pivotably attached to said intermediate member at an end of said second portion opposite said junction of said first and second portions.
4. The automobile hinge of claim 3, wherein said intermediate member includes a panel stop member at said end that is configured to engage a portion of said panel attachment plate to limit pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate.
5. The automobile hinge of claim 2, wherein said intermediate member includes a body plate stop member that is configured to engage a portion of said body attachment plate to limit pivotal movement of said intermediate member away from said first position.

6. The automobile hinge of claim 5, wherein said body plate stop member comprises at least one flange protruding from said first portion of said intermediate member and configured to engage a corresponding flange extending from said body attachment plate.
7. The automobile hinge of claim 1, wherein said body attachment plate comprises at least one generally vertical raised flange extending generally along an edge portion of said body attachment plate and extending generally transverse to said edge portion to define a hinge portion for pivotally attaching said intermediate member to said body attachment plate.
8. The automobile hinge of claim 1, wherein said intermediate member includes at least one panel stop member that is configured to engage a stop portion of said panel attachment plate to limit pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate.
9. The automobile hinge of claim 8, wherein at least one of said panel stop member and said stop portion is adaptable to limit pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate at different positions by being cut to different sizes during the manufacturing of said automobile hinge.
10. The automobile hinge of claim 8, wherein said at least one panel stop member comprises a pair of panel stop members extending from respective ones of said sidewalls of said intermediate member.
11. The automobile hinge of claim 10, wherein said stop members are adaptable to limit pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate at different positions by being cut to different sizes during the manufacturing of said automobile hinge.
12. The automobile hinge of claim 1, wherein said center flange of said intermediate member includes a fastener portion extending generally toward said body attachment plate when said intermediate member is in said first position, said intermediate member being securable to said body attachment plate via a fastener at said fastener receiving portion.
13. An automobile hinge for pivotably mounting a pivotable panel component to a vehicle body, said automobile hinge comprising:
 - a panel attachment plate adapted to be secured to a pivotable panel of a vehicle;

a body attachment plate adapted to be secured to a vehicle body; and
an intermediate member pivotably attached to said body attachment plate, said panel attachment plate pivotably attached to said intermediate member, said intermediate member including at least one stop adapted to limit the range of pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate with respect to said intermediate member, said at least one stop limiting the pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate at different positions by being cut to different sizes during the manufacturing of said automobile hinge.

14. The automobile hinge of claim 13, wherein said intermediate member comprises said first portion and a second portion arranged at an angle relative to one another, said intermediate member being pivotably attached to said body attachment plate at a junction of said first and second portions.

15. The automobile hinge of claim 14, wherein said panel attachment plate is pivotably attached to said intermediate member at an end of said second portion opposite said junction of said first and second portions.

16. The automobile hinge of claim 14, wherein said intermediate member includes opposite sidewalls and a center flange extending between said opposite sidewalls.

17. The automobile hinge of claim 16, wherein said at least one panel stop member comprises a pair of panel stop members extending from respective ones of said sidewalls of said intermediate member at said end of said second portion.

18. The automobile hinge of claim 16, wherein said sidewalls of said first portion engage said body attachment plate with said center flange being spaced from said body attachment plate when said intermediate member is pivoted toward a first position where said first portion of said intermediate member is positioned generally along said body attachment plate.

19. The automobile hinge of claim 18, wherein said center flange of said first portion includes a fastener portion extending toward said body attachment plate when said intermediate member is in said first position, said intermediate member being securable to said body attachment plate via a fastener at said fastener receiving portion.

20. The automobile hinge of claim 18, wherein said intermediate member includes a body plate stop member that is configured to engage a portion of said body attachment plate to limit pivotal movement of said intermediate member away from said first position.

21. The automobile hinge of claim 20, wherein said body plate stop member comprises at least one flange protruding from said first portion of said intermediate member and configured to engage a corresponding flange extending from said body attachment plate.

22. The automobile hinge of claim 13, wherein said body attachment plate comprises at least one generally vertical raised flange extending generally along an edge portion of said body attachment plate and extending generally transverse to said edge portion to define a hinge portion for pivotally attaching said intermediate member to said body attachment plate.

23. A method for making an automobile hinge comprising:
providing a panel attachment plate adapted to be secured to a pivotable panel component of a vehicle;
providing a body attachment plate adapted to be secured to a vehicle body;
providing an intermediate member;
pivotably attaching said intermediate member to said body attachment plate;
pivotably attaching said panel attachment plate to said intermediate member; and
trimming a stop portion of one of said intermediate member and said panel attachment plate to define a stop, said stop being configured to limit the range of pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate with respect to said intermediate member, a degree of said trimming adapting said stop to define the stopping position of said panel attachment plate with respect to said intermediate member.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein providing an intermediate member comprises stamping an intermediate member out of sheet metal.

25. The method of claim 23, wherein trimming said stop portion comprises punching said stop on said intermediate member.

26. The method of claim 23, wherein said hinge is adapted to be attached to a vehicle body and a vehicle gate, said method including attaching a vehicle gate to said panel attachment plate and attaching said body attachment plate to a vehicle body.

27. The method of claim 23, wherein trimming said stop portion comprises trimming a greater portion from said intermediate member to create a greater range of motion of said panel attachment plate with respect to said intermediate member.

28. The method of claim 23, wherein trimming said stop portion comprises trimming a lesser portion from said intermediate member to create a lesser range of motion of said panel attachment plate with respect to said intermediate member.

29. An automobile hinge for pivotably mounting a pivotable panel component to a vehicle body, said automobile hinge comprising:

a panel attachment plate adapted to be secured to a pivotable panel of a vehicle;

an intermediate member, said intermediate member comprising first and second leg portions angularly disposed relative to one another, said panel attachment plate being pivotably attached at or near an end of said first leg portion opposite a junction of said first and second leg portions; and

a body attachment plate, said body attachment plate including a plate portion adapted to be secured to a vehicle body and at least one generally vertical raised flange having a first flange portion extending at least partially along an edge portion of said plate portion and a second flange portion extending at an angle to said first flange portion to define a hinge portion of said body attachment plate, said at least one raised flange providing structural support to said plate portion, said intermediate member being pivotably attached to said body attachment plate at said hinge portion via a pivot member extending through said second flange portion and through said intermediate member.

30. The hinge of claim 29, wherein said second flange portion of said at least one raised flange comprises spaced apart and opposed second flange portions that cooperatively define said hinge portion.

31. The hinge of claim 30, wherein said at least one raised flange comprises two flanges along opposite portions of said edge portion of said plate portion, each of said flanges

extending generally transverse to said edge portion and comprising a respective one of the spaced apart and opposed second flange portions to cooperatively define said hinge portion.

32. The hinge of claim 29, wherein said second leg portion of said intermediate member includes at least one stop extending therefrom, said at least one raised flange of said body attachment plate including a raised projection extending therefrom for engaging said at least one stop to limit pivotal movement of said intermediate member about said pivot member.

33. The hinge of claim 29, wherein said first and second leg portions of said intermediate member comprise opposite sidewalls and a center flange extending between said opposite sidewalls.

34. The hinge of claim 33, wherein said sidewalls of said second leg portion engage said plate portion of said body attachment plate with said center flange being spaced from said plate portion when said intermediate member is pivoted toward a first position where said second leg portion is positioned generally along said plate portion.

35. The hinge of claim 34, wherein said intermediate member is securable in said first position relative to said body attachment plate.

36. The hinge of claim 35, wherein said center flange of said second leg portion includes a fastener portion extending generally toward said plate portion when said intermediate member is in said first position, said intermediate member being securable to said plate portion via a fastener at said fastener receiving portion.

37. The hinge of claim 29, wherein said first leg portion of said intermediate member includes at least one stop adapted to limit the range of pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate with respect to said intermediate member.

38. The hinge of claim 37, wherein said at least one stop is adapted to limit the pivotal movement of said panel attachment plate at different positions by being cut to different sizes during the manufacturing of said automobile hinge.